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CASE 4-31673A

1654/8



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February 20, 2004

Date of Deposit

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF

Art Unit: 1654

JOSEPH M. AULT

Examiner: Meller, Michael V.

APPLICATION NO: 10/006,311

FILED: DECEMBER 4, 2001

FOR: PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOSITIONS FOR THE ORAL DELIVERY
OF PHARMACOLOGICALLY ACTIVE AGENTS**RECEIVED**

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

MAR 01 2004

AMENDMENT

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated August 20, 2003, having a period for response set to expire November 20, 2003, Applicants respectfully request the following amendment be entered and the claims considered in light thereof. Applicants also herein request a three month extension for this response as allowed under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a). The Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 19-0134 in the name of Novartis Corporation for the fee required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(a).

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 16 has been added. Claim 16 may be found in the attached sheet at the end of this amendment.

REMARKS:

The Applicants note that the Examiner has stated in the Office Action that claims 7-14 are withdrawn from consideration in the present application. The Applicants have elected Group I in response to the Examiner Restriction Requirement dated June 26, 2003. Group I was chosen by